

THE Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

BRIEFS

CHURCHES SHUTTERED IN INDIA; MORE LIKELY

NEW DELHI, India (BP) — Officials and police in Tamil Nadu state in India have ordered 10 churches to discontinue worship services. Hindu extremists compelled authorities to issue orders to the churches in Coimbatore District to stop worship unless they obtain permission, church leaders reported. The extremists reportedly intend to target 20 more churches in the same way. An Assemblies of God Church in Thennampalayam was targeted this summer when extremists attacked a van transporting children and assaulted three young people.

FIGHT CONTINUES OVER TRANSGENDER SERVICE

WASHINGTON (BP) — A federal judge's decision to block the Trump administration from enforcing a ban of transgender military service is "likely" to be overturned on appeal, says Mike Whitehead, the Missouri Baptist Convention's attorney and a former member of the U.S. Army's Judge Advocate General's Corps. "The Obama Defense Department changed the longstanding policy just last year regarding transgender service in the military, and President Trump merely changed it back. A D.C. trial judge cannot substitute her judgment for the President's about what is good for military readiness and unit cohesion," Whitehead asserts.

PASTOR: JESUS ANSWER TO OPIOID DRUG CRISIS

WASHINGTON (BP) — U.S. President Donald Trump's declaration that America's opioid crisis is a public health emergency has resulted in calls for churches to heighten their response to drug abuse. The opioid crisis is a "major problem," said former drug addict Robby Gallaty, pastor of Long Hollow Church in Hendersonville, TN. His testimony encourages addicts to seek freedom in Christ. The crisis is an opportunity "to show people that the thing they're searching for and seeking is not found in a drug. It's found in a man, and his name is Jesus," he said.

182ND ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION Vincent elected; '18 CP budget finalized

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Messengers elected a new president and unanimously approved a 2018 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget of \$31,404,110 at the 182nd annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at First Church, Jackson.

Mark Vincent, senior pastor of Clarke-Venable Church in Decatur, defeated Joe Pate, pastor of Forest Church, Forest, for his first term as president. Vote totals were not announced. He succeeds Doug Broome, senior pastor of First Church, Natchez.

John Pace, pastor of First Church, Terry, was elected by acclamation to his second term as first vice-president. Tommy Snyder, pastor of First Church, Batesville, was elected by acclamation to his first term as second vice-president. He succeeds Dan Howard, pastor of First Church, Philadelphia.

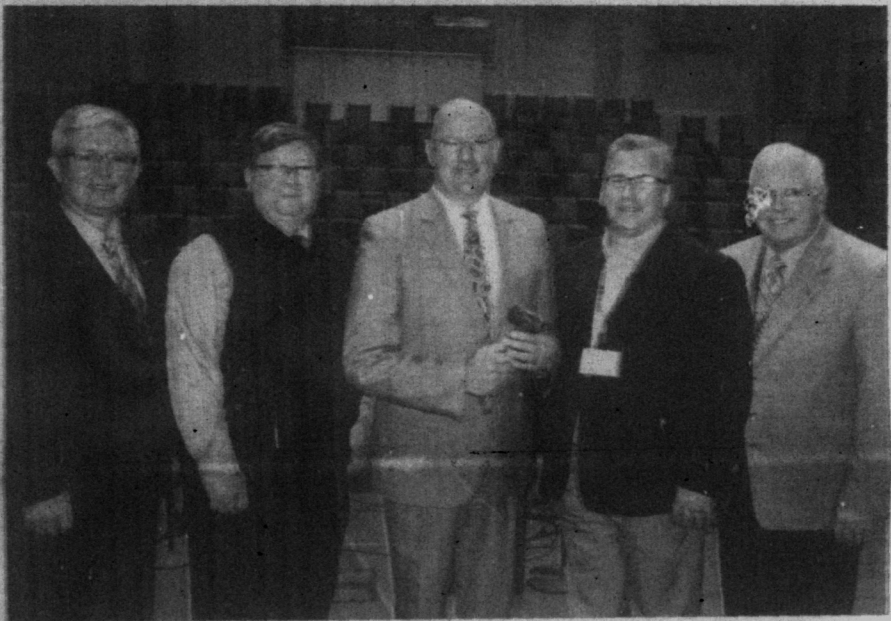
Michael Weeks, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church in Olive Branch, was elected by acclamation to another term as recording secretary. Jerry Bingham, missions director for Benton-Tippah Association in Ripley, was elected by acclamation to another term as assistant recording secretary.

The offices of president, first vice-president, and second vice-president are limited to two terms. The offices of recording secretary and assistant recording secretary are not term-limited.

The 2018 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget of \$31,404,110, is .08% higher than the 2017 budget of \$31,378,417. Southern Baptist Convention causes will see an increase of .08% to \$11,776,541, or 37.5% of the total Mississippi Cooperative Program budget.

Those Southern Baptist Convention causes and the amounts to be disbursed in 2018 are:

- International Mission Board, \$5,936,633.
- North American Mission Board, \$2,683,795.



NEW OFFICERS — Messengers from member churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention elected Mark Vincent (center), senior pastor of Clarke-Venable Church in Decatur, to his first term as convention president during the 2017 MBC annual meeting Oct. 31-Nov. 1, at First Church, Jackson. Other officers elected during the meeting included (from left) Jerry Bingham, assistant recording secretary and missions director for Benton-Tippah Association, Ripley; Michael Weeks, recording secretary and pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch; John Pace, first vice-president and pastor of First Church, Terry; and Tommy Snyder, second vice-president and pastor of First Church, Batesville. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

- Theological Education, \$2,609,682.
- Southern Baptist Convention Operating, \$352,040.
- Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, \$194,391.

The Challenge portion of the 2018 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget — any gifts that exceed the established budget — will be divided 50% to Southern Baptist Convention causes and 50% to Christian education.

Messenger registration was set at 765, a 7.8% decrease from the 2016 annual meeting messenger total of 830.

Speakers delivering messages at the annual meeting in-

cluded the President's Address by Broome; the convention sermon by Ronald Meeks, professor at Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain; Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB); and Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of multi-campus Cross Church in north-west Arkansas.

Mississippi native Michael Catt, senior pastor of Sherwood Church in Albany, Ga., delivered the Bible Treasures series of devotionals. Under Catt's leadership, Sherwood Church produced the popular

see CONVENTION on p. 6

(AT TOP) LIFTING PRAISE — Messengers and guests at the 182nd annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at First Church, Jackson, join together in the church's Sanctuary to worship and praise God and His Son, Jesus Christ. Messengers elected a new convention president, unanimously approved a 2018 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget of \$31,404,110, and heard powerful preaching from leaders in the Mississippi Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

The aftermath

It happened again, and most likely not for the last time — another Southern Baptist church hit hard by the murderous actions of an angry man with no regard for the sanctity of a church nor the people inside that church.

On Sunday last, self-described atheist Devin Patrick Kelley destroyed 26 Christians gathered for worship at First Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, and wounded at least 20 others. Some of the victims were mere children and babies, including one *in utero*. Given the high number of critical cases among the injured survivors, there could be more fatalities to add to the list in the coming days and months. Let us hope that will not happen.

As authorities endeavor to sort out the life and motivations of the shooter that led him to commit an act as heinous as the mass murder and maiming of so many men, women, and children, let us pray constantly for the small church in rural south Texas where it happened, and for the small community where it happened where everyone knows everyone. They're hurting, tremendously. They need us now, just as we would need them if the situation was reversed — and it may well be at a point in the future.

Before the blood of the victims was dry on the church floor, the 24-hour talking heads that filled our television screens were making hay for their own selfish purposes. No consideration was given for the loved ones and friends of those who were cut down.

One crass politician, Democrat Congressman Ted Lieu of California, walked out of a moment of silence observance in the chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., protesting that he had been to too many such observances.

"I will not be silent," Lieu pompously declared in a Facebook Live broadcast from just outside the House chamber while the moment of silence was ongoing. "What we need is we need action. We need to pass gun safety legislation now." Forget the victims, Lieu seems to be saying, and let's get on with everyone's pet political projects.

Novelist Stephen King, noted for his popular tales of horror over the past several decades, tweeted just a few hours after the massacre, "Enough with the prayin'. Time to start legislatin'."

Will Wheaton, an actor who has appeared in the *Star Trek* movies, referred to Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Paul Ryan as a sack of excrement (word substitution for the original reference) for calling on Americans to pray for the people of Sutherland Springs.

Grammy Award winner Michael McKeon, who also starred in the television sitcom *Laverne and Shirley*, tweeted less than four hours after the killings, "They had the prayers shot right out of them. Maybe try something else." How morbidly sarcastic, so much so that his point is lost.

"Not every member of the gun control chorus responds to prayers for victims with scornful revulsion. But those who stoop to that level display a religious bigotry that reveals their sheer contempt for the answers many believe are the only real way to reduce these tragedies: a reliance on God," wrote radio show host Mark Davis on dallasnews.com, a web site of the *Dallas Morning News* in Dallas.

"Preachers of the Gospel of Gun Control are welcome to kneel at the altar of government if they wish; but others will choose to address the issue through the lens of a fallen, sin-stained world, calling on God to redeem it, and each of us. That has the power to prevent more gun tragedies than any new wave of laws," Davis pointed out.

Amen to that. We must ignore the slings and arrows of the mean-spirited secular antagonists who know nothing about us, and reach out to God in times like this.

Frank Pomeroy, the pastor of First Church in Sutherland Springs — who himself lost his 14-year-old daughter to the shooter — through his manifold grief told reporters on the scene, "I don't understand, but I know my God does."

May we all remember that fact as we face our own tragedies in this life.

Nine Precious Tears

As I write this, we have just finished an amazing three days of revival as two churches joined together to seek a fresh move of God. John Avant with Life Actions Ministries concluded the final service, and I approached the stage for some final remarks.

That's when I noticed something on the platform that I don't recall seeing before. It was a puddle of tears. I counted them. Nine large tears were puddled up on the wooden platform. The altar was full with people praying, so I have no idea who left their tears on the altar.

I was struck by what those tears represented: hope, faith, and brokenness before the Lord. Someone was genuinely crying out to God for His intervention. When they got up and left the altar, they left their tears there. I've been the pastor of my church for 21 years, and I can't recall ever seeing a puddle of tears at the altar.

Maybe we're starting to see the first signs of real revival. Maybe that fresh move of God we've been seeking has already begun, at least for that one person. I know emotion and tears by themselves can never bring revival. God is the one who sends revival to His people.

However, the Bible seems to indicate that God responds to our brokenness. In 2 Kings 20, King Hezekiah became terminally ill. He was told to set his house in order because he would soon die. He did what you and I would do in that situation. He prayed, perhaps in a way he had never prayed before. God noticed.

It's very possible that a puddle of tears formed at Hezekiah's feet as he prayed. God said to him through the prophet Isaiah, "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold I will heal you" (2 Kings 20:5 NASB).



Guest opinion

with Keith Shorter

I can't fully explain it, but our tears seem to move God's heart.

Does your church need revival or, better yet, do you? Find a place to pray. I mean really pray. I don't think that God is reluctant to send revival. I think we're reluctant to really want it. We're content to keep God at a distance.

Maybe that's changing at our church. Perhaps one by one we are starting to realize that God is ready to do a fresh work in us if we will turn our faces toward Him, rather than our backs.

I have hope for the church in America. It seems more and more people are getting thirsty for God. Let's pray for God to break through our excuses and our apathy. Let's call out to Him and genuinely surrender our lives to the Lord.

One day soon, I hope that you will see something in your church that will stop you in your tracks — a puddle of tears. The one who holds our tears in a bottle may use them to ignite the fires of revival. Wouldn't that be just like God?

Shorter is president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention and pastor of Mt. Airy Church in Easley, S.C. This column first appeared in the *Baptist Courier* (baptistcourier.com), the convention's news journal, and appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style.

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Country reeling from murderer's 'demonic' act

SUTHERLAND SPRINGS, Texas (BP and local reports) — Local pastors and field personnel are responding to the deadliest church shooting in U.S. history Nov. 5 at First Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

Professionals began providing grief counseling within hours of the mass shooting that claimed 26 lives and hospitalized another 20 church members — many in critical condition.

Authorities said Devin Patrick Kelley, 26, an avowed atheist who was drummed out of the U.S. Air Force for assaulting his wife and young son, shot nearly everyone attending the small church before himself dying after a high-speed chase with armed civilians.

It was unclear at press deadline whether he took his own life at the end of the chase.

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Steve Gaines, senior pastor of Bellevue Church in suburban Memphis, and Frank Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville, arrived in Sutherland Springs Nov. 7 to offer prayer and encouragement.

Jim Richards, executive director of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) in Dallas, was on the scene the day after the shootings.

Southern Baptist's North American Mission Board (NAMB) in Alpharetta, Ga., has confirmed that on behalf of the SBC, the board has offered to cover funeral expenses for all the shooting victims in coordination with SBTC.

Frank Pomeroy, the church's pastor, was out of town when the shooting occurred. His 14-year-old daughter, Annabelle Renee, was among the dead.

Wiping away tears, Pomeroy assured reporters the church's tragedy will exalt Christ. "Christ is the one who's going to be lifted up," he said on Nov. 6. "That's what I'm telling everybody. You lean into what you don't understand. You lean into the Lord... Whatever life brings to you, lean on the Lord rather than your own understanding."

"I don't understand, but I know my God does and that's where I'll leave that."

Pomeroy's wife Sherri, who also was out of town during the shooting, expressed thanks for the "outpouring of love" by friends, community members, and even strangers. She said as much tragedy as Annabelle's death entails for the family, "we don't want to overshadow the other lives lost yesterday. We lost more than Belle yesterday."

"One thing that gives me a sliver of encouragement is the fact that Belle was surrounded yesterday by her church family that she loved fiercely, and vice versa."



BROKEN HEARTED — Frank Pomeroy (left), pastor of First Church in Sutherland, Texas, and his wife Sherri talk with reporters outside the church in the midst of mourning for their 14-year-old daughter Annabelle and the other church members killed or wounded by an atheist gunman on Nov. 5. (Screen capture from ABC News on Twitter)



ANNABELLE POMEROY

"Our church was not comprised of members or parishioners. We were a very close family. We ate together, we laughed together, we cried together and worshiped together."

"Now most of our church family is gone, our building probably beyond repair, and the few of us that are left behind lost tragically yesterday."

"Please don't forget Sutherland Springs," she said.

Wilson County Sheriff Joe Tackitt said nearly everyone inside the church had some type of injury, according to CNN. The dead ranged from an unborn baby in its mother's womb, to an 18-month-old, to a 77-year-old. The Times reported.

At least eight of the dead were members of one family.

When Kelley exited the church, he reportedly exchanged gunfire with a bystander and was pursued in a high-speed car chase by the bystander and another local resident, according to media reports.

The chase ended when Kelley crashed his SUV, in which authorities found him dead.



INSIDE CHURCH — An undated photo circulating on the Internet allegedly shows the inside of First Church, Sutherland, Texas, on an unknown Sunday before the mass shooting that killed 26 church members and wounded 20 more congregants. (Unattributed photo)

A domestic situation may have motivated the killing spree, according to authorities. His ex-mother in law attended the church, and his ex-wife's grandmother was among the dead.

Gaines told Baptist Press (BP) that SBC leaders want to help the church however they can. "Yesterday as we prayed at Bellevue for the families of those slain and also the others who were wounded at First Baptist Church, Sutherland Springs, I sensed the need to go there and try to minister to the pastor and his wife and their devastated congregation."

"I discussed it with Frank Page and Jim Richards, and we all agreed to go and help any way we possibly can. Our Southern Baptist family grieves with this beloved church and the community it serves."

"Our prayers are ascending steadily to God's throne of grace. May God bring healing and hope to these that are hurting."

Page said he and Gaines hope to "show our love" for the Pomeroy family, the church congregation, and the small town.

Initially, friends and family members of victims gathered at a small community center where eight or nine Southern Baptist pastors from the local Gambrell Association offered counseling and prayer, Kolenovsky said.

River Oaks Church opened its facility as a shelter for family members. Disaster relief chaplains from the SBTC and the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) were on site, into the early morning hours on Monday to provide grief counseling and continue to minister in the area.

Both First Church and River Oaks Church cooperate with the SBTC. River Oaks also cooperates with the BGCT.

Local pastors who cooperate with the BGCT also are ministering in Sutherland Springs, the BGCT told BP.

BGCT executive David Hardage said in a statement, "On behalf of our entire Texas Baptists family, I extend my deepest condolences to the church family of First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, the community, and all who lost loved ones during yesterday's tragedy."

"We join others in prayer, and trust that whatever happens, the Lord is our salvation and our stronghold."

Kolenovsky said all the local ministry efforts have evidenced "God at work through his church." Richards told Fox News Nov. 5 the shooting was "spiritual warfare" and a "demonic attack."

Spiritual warfare often "takes the form of physical violence," he said. "It's heartbreaking and horrific. This will not stop the Gospel of Christ. It will not stop the godly people who seek to serve the Lord there, so we're coming alongside them in every way we possibly can."

Frank Pomeroy's comments to reporters following the shooting echoed remarks he made during a sermon the week before from Proverbs 3:5-6. Motorcycle enthusiast Pomeroy told of riding his Harley Davidson with Annabelle aboard to church that previous Sunday, and compared leaning into turns with trusting God through life's difficult times.

"God's understanding is far greater" than ours, Pomeroy said according to a recording of his Oct. 29 sermon. "There may be things going on that you don't understand, but you still need to do what God is calling you to do... Leaning into God is the way we should go, even if it does not make sense, like leaning into a turn."

A community prayer gathering was scheduled for the evening of Nov. 8 at the football stadium at nearby Floresville High School.

I don't know about you, but from time to time there will be something that happens or comes my way that seems to change the atmosphere and stay with me the rest of the day. I'm not talking about big things, like a bomb being dropped on your city or a tornado coming through your community. I'm just talking about little things that can, in a moment of time, make a difference in your life for a period. The big things are bad, but thankfully they rarely come. The little things? Oh, they will sneak up on you every day.

A few years ago I left home early traveling to a church where I was to preach. Because it was so early, I had a cup of coffee with me in the car. As I drove along listening to the radio and thinking about where I was going to speak and trying to drink my coffee all at the same time, I hit a bump in the road and thoughtlessly jerked my cup of coffee toward the steering wheel. The coffee spilled all over me.

Now I've got a dilemma. Am I going to turn around and go back home and get some other clothes? Quickly I realized I wouldn't get to the speaking engagement if I did, so now here I am driving along with a shirt that had a huge coffee stain on it and the front of my pants that were also coffee colored and no time to do anything about it. I just kept on driving. Spilling some coffee on you is not the end of the world, but it can seem like it at the moment. Soon you're going to be standing before all these folks and hopefully you can stay behind the podium and no one will ever notice. I can tell you that for the rest of the drive and for the time that I was at the church and until I could get back home and change, I was concerned about it. Just a few thimbles of coffee made a mess of most of my day. It's that way with a lot of folks, and I think in Jesus' day He dealt with people who worried so much about things that weren't worth worrying about.



Don't Let the Little Things Ruin Your Day

Just think about the little discoveries you can run into today that will mess everything up. A friend of mine saw this sign the other day that he shared with me: "Nothing ruins my Friday as much as to discover it's actually Wednesday." Those kinds of discoveries can mess you up in a moment or even worse, like a fella said, "The only thing worse than finding a worm in your apple is to find half a worm in your apple." Now, what are you going to do? Of course, it's time to stop, reevaluate, maybe find a place where you can get away from folks, and spit out whatever you've taken in. That may need to take place in our lives more often than we think. Jesus told the people to look at the flowers of the field. They aren't worrying and the Father is taking care of them. He'll take care of you, and so He will (Matt. 6:25-34).

Beyond the little discoveries of life, there are the little disappointments of life. Maybe you didn't get the recognition that you thought you deserved. It was just an oversight of someone, but it messed up

your day. Maybe you feel other people aren't pulling their weight and doing their job, and you feel like Simon Peter when he said, "What's that man going to do?" We often wonder why other people are not doing their duties, and we spend too much of our time thinking they aren't accomplishing what we think they ought to — when actually we're wasting our time not accomplishing what we ought to accomplish. There are disappointments in life for sure. People will disappoint you, and you will disappoint people. If you want to, you can let that be the whole focus of your life. Don't do it. Don't let those little things ruin your life.

The third thing is the little delays that come in life. Have you ever thought about how many of life's heartbreaks are because of delays? You're expecting something. You really have great expectations about some event, some person, some work in your life, and it doesn't come to fruition. Maybe it will later, but it didn't as you wanted it to take place. The phone did not ring. The mailman did not deliver it. There seems to be silence on the

other side of the hope, and it begins to ruin your day and the next one and the next one.

It's interesting how delays create such turmoil within us. I remember years ago as a young pastor I was talking to a church that was interested in me coming to be their pastor. It looked like everything was going in a positive direction. The chairman of the committee told me that he would call me at a certain time the next day. Feeling that this is where I ought to be going and what we ought to be doing, I waited as that time came and the phone didn't ring. An hour passed and the phone didn't ring. I began to think all kind of bad thoughts, like they were trying to figure out how to tell me they didn't want me to be their pastor. I tried to be positive and think, "Well, maybe the chairman has gotten sick or had a heart attack or something." Everything I was thinking turned out to be wrong though I didn't know that at the time.

The day went by and no phone call. It was later in the afternoon when he called. The reason he called was because some of the members of the committee called him to see how the call went that he didn't make. Checking his calendar, he had put the call that he was to make on the wrong day. I didn't know that until later that evening when he called me and apologized. I spent all day thinking bad thoughts, all of which were unnecessary.

There are delays that come in all our lives that we probably need to put in the hands of God rather than process ourselves, for sometimes there are delays about which we really get upset that are maybe in the clear plan and path of the will of God for us. For today, if no other day, let this be a reminder — Don't let little things ruin your day.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

2016-2017 Memorial

From the beginning, God has richly blessed Mississippi Baptist churches with choice servants whose passion has been to win Mississippi and the world to Jesus. The Mississippi Baptist Convention wishes to honor those servants who were called to heaven during the 2016-17 church year, including:

Jimmy Bain Sr., Coll. Missionary Network
Clayton Bath, Metro Association
Howard Benton, Rankin Association
Roy Bostick, Alcorn Association
Duane "Doc" Bradford, Tri-County Assoc.
Gerald Buckley, Pine Belt Association
Donald Campbell, Clarke Association
Holmes Carlisle, Scott Association
Roger Carlisle, Lauderdale Association
Kent Cochran, Lincoln Association
Grady Cothen, Metro Association
George Crosby Sr., Tri-County Assoc.
Joe Crout, Metro Association
Roy Dabbs, Lauderdale Association
Will Daniel, Tri-County Association
Harry Douglas, Metro Association

Lonnie Dunn, Coll. Missionary Network
Robert Dunn, Tri-County Association
Simon Erkhart, George-Greene Assoc.
Eugene Haden, Lamar County Assoc.
Bartis Harper, Pine Belt Association
Ted Hawkins, Scott Association
Joe Herndon, Pontotoc Association
Donny Hill, Coll. Missionary Network
Ricky Holloway, Webster Association
James Hutcherson Sr., Golden Triangle
Jimmy King, Lamar County Assoc.
Tommy Leach, Newton Association
Joe Lovelady, Coll. Missionary Network
James Manning, Wayne Association
John McBride, Copiah Association
Michael McDowell, George-Greene Assoc.
Wayne McGee, Leake & Scott Association
Alvin Moore, Newton Association
Ralph Morris, Winston Association
Ray Moseley, Simpson Association
Billy Murphy, Lamar County/Perry Assoc.
Glenn Nations, Metro Association

Carl Nickels, Webster Association
Pete Pearson, Carroll/Montgomery Assoc.
Robert Perry Sr., Rankin Association
Raymond Pigg, Pine Belt Association
Enoch Purvis, Union County Association
Jerry Purvis, Lamar County Association
Charles Ray, Carroll/Montgomery Assoc.
Bill Riley, Jasper Association
Tony Rocks, Chickasaw Association
C. V. Rushing, Lincoln Association
Ernest Ryals, Tri-County Association
Tim Sanford, Jones Association
Bobby Shows, Lincoln Association
Walter Simmons, North Central Assoc.
Kenneth Stringer, Cov.-Jeff. Davis Assoc.
Jerry Stroe, Jones Association
Robert Toney III, Mississippi Association
Norman Walker, Jr., Metro Association
Taylor Wallace, Clarke Association
Roy Wilburn, Rankin Association
Lamar Williams, Cov.-Jeff. Davis Assoc.
Zack Wittingham, Simpson Association
Walter Yeager, Webster Association

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

November 9, 2017

HouseTops is a **Baptist Record** supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's **Communication Services**.

Thanks For Giving

Your friends at the Mississippi Baptist Foundation want to convey our appreciation for the generous hearts Mississippi Baptists have for Kingdom work.

We are blessed to serve you and be available to help Mississippi Baptists frame their legacies with the Great Commission in mind.

Psalm 24:1

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2018 STATE SENIOR ADULT EVANGELISM RALLY

SHARING THE FAITH ON MY JOURNEY

January 30, 2018

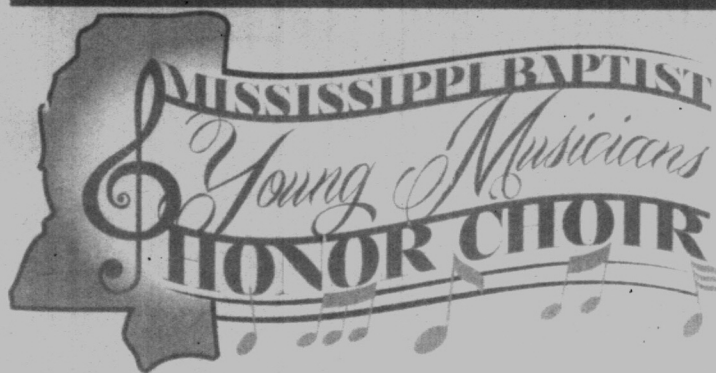
Brandon Baptist Church

Brandon, MS

8:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

No registration needed. For more information, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at 601-292-3284 or tpresson@mbcb.org

Church Music



SAVE THE DATE: April 21-22, 2018

Mississippi Baptist Young Musicians Honor Choir auditions are continuing through November. These video auditions may be submitted by: e-mail, snail mail, Dropbox or text.

DEADLINE: November 15, 2017

Inquiries may be directed to Wyndy South at 601-292-3272 or wsouth@mbcb.org

PASTOR/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

**Bivocational Pastors –
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

The Pastor/Leadership Development Department is defining "bivocational" as a man who is employed in one or more occupations apart from his paid service as pastor of a local church, where the church does not provide a salary sufficient for him to devote full-time service to the church field.

If this statement defines your current role, we would like to invite you to take our Bivocational Needs Survey at: tinyurl.com/BivoSurvey

For more information, contact Vesta Clary at 601-292-3305 or vclary@mbcb.org



Witnessing Through Media Awards Competition is Coming

- Entries in the Awards Competition must have been produced or aired between January 1, 2017 - January 1, 2018
- Award Entry Deadline is January 19, 2018
- Entry form and registration will be online soon

Contact Communication Services
1-800-748-1651, ext. 576 or 292-3576
or e-mail irichardson@mbcb.org

Small Church Youth Ministry Workshops

6:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m. | Supper is served at 6:00 p.m.

January 18, 2018
Poplar Springs Baptist Church
Mendenhall, MS

February 8, 2018
Carrollton Baptist Church
Carrollton, MS

February 15, 2018
First Baptist Church
Baldwyn, MS

February 22, 2018
LaBelle Haven Baptist Church
Olive Branch, MS

March 1, 2018
First Baptist Church
Waynesboro, MS

For questions, contact Discipleship & Family Ministry at
601-292-3284 or visit
www.tinyurl.com/2018SmallChurch to register.

"I AM HERE, LORD!"

2018 STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE
Brandon Baptist Church
January 28-29, 2018



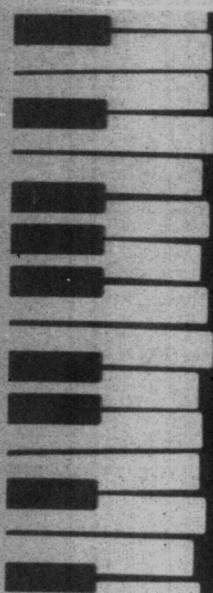
For more information about the event, please contact the
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JANUARY 25
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- AREA 2 FBC, Starkville
- AREA 3 FBC, Jackson
- AREA 4 Poplar Springs Drive BC, Meridian
- AREA 5 Main Street BC, Hattiesburg
- AREA 5 FBC, Summit
- AREA 5 FBC, Pascagoula
- AREA 5 FBC, Laurel

JANUARY 26
6:30 - 8:30 PM

- AREA 1 FBC, Senatobia

JANUARY 27
9:30 AM - NOON

- AREA 1 Emmanuel BC, Grenada
- AREA 1 North Greenwood BC, Greenwood

For more info, contact Wyndy Sputh at
601-292-3272 or wsouth@mbcb.org

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Theme: "GO SERVE!"

Date: February 17, 2018

"Serve one another humbly
in love." Galatians 5:13

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June 16-30, 2018

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Community College
Summit, MS

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Pray this day for...

November 10 - December 7, 2017

"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

Pray for: **Kevin & Brenda Peacock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through theological education & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Michael & Sarah Prewitt**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Eugenia Putnam**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **Tracy Putnam**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **John & Deborah Royals**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Robert Mooney**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Jonathan & Bethany Sharp**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **Stephen & Svetlana Parish**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **George & Geraldine Smith**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Thomas & Janna Smith**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support & church planting.

Pray for: **Karl & Peggy Wallace**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through mission administration & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Regina White**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Floyd & Sylvia Wingo**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination.

Pray for: **Charles & Shannon Worthy**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **James & Mary Adair**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Bethany Allen**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **Richard & Martha Beal**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through financial administration & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **David & Laine Bledsoe**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through general evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Kaye Brooks**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **Karen Brown**, missionary ministering to American Peoples through nursing.

Pray for: **Matthew Burks**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through general evangelism.

Pray for: **Rebekah Clark**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through youth evangelism.

Pray for: **Cindy DeMara**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Guy DeMara**, missionary ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through hospitality coordination.

Pray for: **Thomas & Kerri Dewett**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through general evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Aaron & Tiffany Epps**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through general evangelism & church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Sheila Flowers**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through administration.

Pray for: **Clarence Frank & Phoebe Harrison**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples.



Mr. Wyatt
1/4/11
Parents: L & L
Restricted

Mr. Titus D.
1/4/12
Parents: K & C
Restricted

Mr. Caleb
1/19/12
Parents: D & R
Restricted

Mr. Tate
1/19/12
Parents: L & L
Restricted

Miss Aimee
1/27/00
Parents: T & J
Restricted

To Be Sent December 20, 2017, by the WMU Office

PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING: Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending Birthday cards! Because of the sending to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Record, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is posted two months ahead to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthday. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!

NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.

FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: MCB WMU MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.

Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

Symphony Orchestra
RETREAT

January 12-13, 2018
Madison Central High School



Contact the Church Music Department at cwtaylor@mbcb.org to register.

HOUSE TOPS

BIBL iO CIPHER

NGPOP PWYSE OHSC EYU, SECUWP,

QGVWOPG SECO EWPS PGGH UG, SECO

EWPS QGRYJGA: QRGPPGA WDG

SEGT SEWS EWJG HCS PGGH, WHA TGS

EWJG QGRYJGA.

NCEH SLGHST: SLGHST-HYHG

Clue: N = J

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs 27:1

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004, © 2005

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MS POSITIONS

THE CALHOUN COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS. All interested applicants should send a resume to: Calhoun County Baptist Association, Drawer S, Calhoun City, MS 38916-0914 / ATTENTION PERSONNEL COMMITTEE. Deadline to apply is November 15th.

ROCKY POINT BAPTIST CHURCH, CARTHAGE, MS, IN LEAKE COUNTY IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR FULL-TIME PASTOR. Please send resumes to Dian Grundy, 3136 Rocky Point Rd., Carthage, Ms., 39051

DREW BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR— Please email resume to drewbaptistchurch@gmail.com or U S mail to Drew Baptist Church, 139 S Church St., Drew, MS 38737

TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF YOUTH. Send Resumes to: 824 China Grove Rd., Jayess, MS 39641 or brodale54@bellsouth.net

RED BANKS BAPTIST CHURCH IS PRAYFULLY SEEKING A FULL TIME PASTOR. Please send resumes to Red Banks Baptist Church, P.O. Box 9, Red Banks, MS 38661.

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Webinar to address growing teen pornography problems

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — How to counter teen pornography use within faith communities is the subject of a webinar next week hosted by the Religious Alliance Against Pornography (RAAP), an interfaith effort to mobilize people to understand and combat pornography.

At least two Southern Baptists serve on the alliance's advisory board:

■ K. Marshall Williams, senior pastor of Nazarene Church in Philadelphia, Pa., and former president of the National African American Fellowship of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

■ Dan Darling, vice president for communications at the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville.

In the past, advisory board members have included Richard Land, retired former president of the ERLC, and the late Adrian Rogers, a two-term SBC president and retired senior pastor of Memphis-area Bellevue Church in Cordova, TN.

"It is my prayer that this webinar will help save, heal, and deliver many from pornography and instill and revive the passion for sexual purity in our youth and adults," Williams said in written comments to Baptist Press.

The Attack on a Generation

NOVEMBER 16

7 P.M.

Offered Nov. 16 at 7 p.m. Central Time, the webinar will cover God's design for sexuality and marriage; the reality that teens are consuming pornography in staggering numbers; and potential courses of action for pastors and parents, according to a webinar outline on the RAAP website.

Among questions to be addressed, according to the outline:

- When should we be talking to our youth about pornography?
- How should adults discuss pornography with teens?
- What are some steps we

can take with users and those who have become addicted?

■ How can adults help teens in safely using the technological devices that are connected to the internet?

Williams said the webinar will relay "practical insights and preventive measures to ensure victorious living when it comes to personal holiness, according to our unique purpose as ordered by the Divine Orderer."

Webinar participants may register at bit.ly/pornographyphys-impact-on-youth.

Billy Graham enters 100th year with broadcasts, celebrations

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (BP) — Sermons from Billy Graham's prolific international ministry will be broadcast on an ad hoc radio station in honor of the evangelist's 99th birthday that occurred on Nov. 7, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) announced.



GRAHAM

BGEA will host the Billy Graham Channel through Nov. 17 as channel 145 on SiriusXM Radio, featuring sermons from Graham's six decades of evangelism as well as salvation invitations and reflections from family and friends, BGEA said.

A companion website, The-BillyGrahamChannel.com, will offer resources.

"[Between] 10 and 20 percent of the U.S. population will have access 24 hours a day to Billy Graham's timeless, Christ-focused messages," Jim Kirkland, BGEA's director of audio media services, said at bgea.org. "We're praying

that it'll be a gift of life-changing magnitude for many listeners."

Zondervan Publishing concurrently announced their upcoming Graham biography, A Prophet with Honor: The Billy Graham Story, is set for a March 2018 release. Graham personally chose as the book's author William Martin, a Rice University religion and public policy professor, Zondervan said.

The book will expound on Graham's autobiography, Just As I Am, by going "further behind the scenes to explain the conditions that made it possible for Graham to achieve his spectacular success and to reveal how sometimes he succeeded in spite of himself," Zondervan said.

Additional celebration plans include a public event at the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C., a private party with family members at his home in Montreat, N.C., and literary commemorations throughout 2018 in BGEA's Decision magazine, BGEA President and CEO Franklin Graham said in a Nov. 1 press release.

"His mind is good but he's quieter these days," Franklin

Graham said of his father. "He can't see or hear well, but his health is stable. As a family, we are just so very grateful that he is still with us."

The Billy Graham Channel continues a legacy of radio ministry the patriarch launched 67 years ago with The Hour of Decision broadcast, which was designed to continue only if sufficient financial contributions came, Kirkland said.

The unexpected influx of monetary support birthed BGEA, Kirkland said, because Graham needed a mechanism to handle the funds.

"This channel will provide the gift of messages that point people to the gift of hope found in Jesus Christ," Kirkland said of the SiriusXM debut. "Mr. Graham is having the birthday, yet the people listening receive the present."

Billy Graham's daughter, evangelist Anne Graham Lotz, will join her brother Franklin Graham in offering reflections during the 12-day broadcast, Kirkland said. Remarks from former U.S. presidents will also be featured.

CONVENTION

cont. from p. 1

Christian-themed movies Flywheel, Facing the Giants, Fireproof, and Courageous.

Worship through music was provided by:

■ Praise Team from First Church, Natchez, directed by First Church, Natchez, director of music ministries Derrick Burt.

■ Mississippi Singing Churchmen, directed by Milfred Valentine, minister of music at Prentiss Church, Prentiss.

■ Mississippi Singing Churchwomen, directed by Slater Murphy, MBCB director of church music.

■ A combined choir from Mississippi Baptist churches in Jones County.

■ Reflections Choir of First Church, Jackson.

■ Heritage Choir of Brandon Church, Brandon.

Robert "Bob" Hill, pastor of Roundaway Church, Doddsville, was presented the Bivocational Pastor of the Year award by Michael Lee, MBCB director of pastor/leadership development.

Mississippi Baptists giving their testimonies were Nick King, member of First



MAKING BEAUTIFUL MUSIC — The Mississippi Singing Churchmen (left) and the Mississippi Singing Churchwomen performed at the Oct. 31 evening session of the 2017 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson. The Churchmen were directed by Milfred Valentine, minister of music at Prentiss Church, Prentiss. The Churchwomen were directed by Slater Murphy, church music director at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The Churchwomen's performance marked their first-ever at a convention annual meeting. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Church, Yazoo City; Gilroy Chow, member of Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale; Clint Walker, sheriff of Carroll County and member of Vaiden Church, Vaiden; and Tommy King, president of William Carey University in Hattiesburg, and university students.

Two resolutions were approved by messengers. The first resolution expressed grati-

tude to First Church, Jackson, for hosting the annual meeting; to the speakers, singers, and instrumentalists; to Doug Broome for serving as president; and to "officers, members of all boards, agencies, institutions, committee members, and volunteers who have served this convention faithfully."

The second resolution recognized the 500-year anniver-

sary of the Protestant Reformation and called on churches "to protect doctrinal fidelity by holding to the five Solas consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message."

No motions were presented for consideration.

Jimmy Porter, chairman of the Time, Place, and Preacher Committee and retired director of the Christian Ac-

tion Commission, announced Ronnie Falvey, senior pastor of First Church, Madison, will deliver the 2018 convention sermon. Scott Thomas II, senior pastor of First Church, Lake, will serve as alternate preacher.

Porter said the 2018 annual meeting will be held at First Church, Jackson, on Oct. 30-31.

College News

► The William Carey University admissions office will host an open house Nov. 15, from 1 to 4 p.m. on the Hattiesburg campus. Prospective students and parents will have the opportunity to visit with the admissions office regarding the admissions process, tour campus, meet with an academic department advisor, and discuss scholarships and housing options available for students. To RSVP, please contact Kristina Wheat at (601) 318-6007 or at kwheat@wmcarey.edu.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. **Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted.** Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be exhaustive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 520, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)
If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Set Apart • Leviticus 9:15-24; 10:1-3

Stop! Before you start today's lesson take a few minutes to read the beginnings of the priesthood, Leviticus 8; the consecration service for Aaron and his sons. What an ordination service! The word "consecration" refers to person or things being separated to or belonging to God. They are holy or sacred. They are set apart for the service of God" (Holman Bible Dictionary, pg. 289). Notice the sequence of events. First, the entire congregation of Israelites (includes women and children) were to assemble to witness this ordination service. Moses brought Aaron, his sons, the garments, the anointing oil, everything for the offerings and comes before the entrance of the tabernacle. Notice the order in which everything was done and sequence of the offerings. As you study this chapter, marvel at the mercy and grace of God. For it was Aaron who fashioned the golden calf and built an altar to worship it. Now he was called to serve as a mediator between God and the people of Israel. Aaron and his sons could not go outside the tent of the meeting for seven days and nights because it was necessary "to make atonement for you" (Lev. 8:34). The morning of the eighth day had arrived and the ministry of the priests was ready to begin.

Cleansed (Lev. 9:15-21) - The beginning of priestly service is found in

verses 1-24. In the first four verses, Aaron presents the offerings for himself. "Then he presented the people's offering . . ." (v. 15 ESV). Again note the order: the sin offering, the burnt offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering of the morning, the peace offerings, and the wave offering. The sin offering was offered first because sin is what separates us from God. Just like a clogged pipe, sin hinders our fellowship with our Heavenly Father. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Therefore, 1 John 1:9 states, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." It was the shedding of the blood on the altar which made the atonement for the people's sin. As you go through the chapters take note of the word 'altar'. Warren Wiersbe writes, "Without an altar, there can be no acceptable sacrifice; without a sacrifice, man cannot ap-

proach a holy God. But there must also be a priesthood to serve at the altar. In the Old Testament, God's people had a priesthood, but in the New Testament, God's people are a priesthood (1 Peter 2:5,9, www.preceptaustin.org). Jesus is our Mediator. We no longer require an earthly priest to approach God. What is necessary for cleansing? Confession!

Blessing (Lev. 9:22-24) - There are actually two moments of blessing in this

Scripture passage. The first is when Aaron completes the offerings. Perhaps he spoke these words, "The LORD bless you and keep you;

the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace" (Num. 6:24-26). The second blessing comes after Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle. When they came out "they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people" (v. 23). Imagine what this must have been like for all the people as

they watched as the "fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and pieces of fat on the altar" (v. 24). God had accepted their offering. The people shouted, fell on their faces and worshipped. For believers today, we have the opportunity to enjoy His blessings as we bask in His presence and worship Him.

Holy (Lev. 10:1-3) - We have just read how God sent down fire, displaying His pleasure. However, the fire was also used to display God's judgment and disapproval. In this text, we learn about Nadab and Abihu and how they violated what the LORD had commanded or prescribed. We may not know exactly what "strange fire" would have been. But it appears they were careless, irreverent, and had a lack of consideration for God. "Whatever they offered reflected an inexcusable disregard both for God's holiness and for the gravity of their responsibilities of serving as anointed priests before Him" ("The Study Bible for Women" by Patterson & Kelley).

We are to be holy as He is holy, reflecting His character. We are to live as a set apart priesthood!

Leathers is a member of First Church, Madison.



Explore the Bible

with Laura Leathers

John: Single-minded Focus • John 1:26-34; 3:26-30

"I didn't know him, but I came baptizing with water so he might be revealed to Israel," John 1:31 (CSB). John the Baptist leaves no room for misunderstanding, saying clearly, that his purpose was that "he (Jesus) might be revealed to Israel."

Matthew makes this clear explanation of John the Baptist role in salvation history: "In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.' This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: 'A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" Matthew 3:1-3 (NIV copy right 1984).

In the King James, we find these comforting and beautiful promises from the prophet Isaiah about John the Baptist and his cousin Jesus:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished; that her iniquity is pardoned: ... 'The voice of him (John the Baptist) crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be

made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.'" Isaiah 40:1-5 (KJV).

I am confident that John the Baptist is this one referred to in Isaiah because the angel Gabriel told John's father, Zechariah, in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke. Zechariah was a priest and was chosen by lots to go into the temple of the Lord to burn the incense. Gabriel was sent into the temple when Zechariah was alone there offering the incense. Dr. Luke tells us that Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, "were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years," Luke 1:6-7 (NIV). Zechariah summarizes the angel's message and the importance of the birth of his son this way, singing to

his son, John, "And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him," Luke 1:70 (NIV).

John the Baptist's strong preaching and unique lifestyle drew crowds into the wilderness. As he was preaching and baptizing we read, "John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away

the sin of the world!'" John 1:29 (CSB). John explains why he is certain that Jesus is the Son of God, the Lamb of God, the one who

takes away the sin of the world. "I didn't know him, but I came baptizing with water so he might be revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and he rested on him. I didn't know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The one you see the Spirit descending and resting on—he is the one who baptizes with

the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God," John 1:31-33 (CSB).

Matthew gives us even more information on the Holy Spirit descending like a dove. "Jesus then appeared, arriving at the Jordan River from Galilee. He wanted John to baptize him. John objected, 'I'm the one who needs to be baptized, not you!' But Jesus insisted. 'Do it. God's work, putting things right all these centuries, is coming together right now in this baptism.' So John did it. The moment Jesus came up out of the Baptismal waters, the skies opened up and he saw God's Spirit—it looked like a dove—descending and landing on him. And along with the spirit, a voice: 'This is my Son, chosen and marked by my love, delight of my life,'" Matthew 3:13-17 (MSG).

Jesus clearly stated his admiration for John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: ... And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," Matthew 11:11-15 (KJV).

Hicks is Associational Missions Director for Jasper Association.

Bible Studies for Life

with Don Hicks



Revivals & Homecomings

► **Phillipston Church, Sidon:** Homecoming and revival, Nov. 10-12; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m., followed

by covered dish lunch; Danny Irvin, pastor and speaker.

► **Horseshoe Church, Tchula:**

Homecoming, Nov. 12, 10:45 a.m., followed by dinner; Kerry Burroughs, speaker; Mike Steen, pastor.

► **First Church, Sand Hill:** Homecoming, Nov. 12; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by

lunch; Mike Jemison, speaker.

► **Jericho Church, Guntown:** Homecoming, Nov. 12, 10 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Jimmy Russell, speaker; Jerry Crawford, music.

Just for the Record



A work crew of members from **STANTON CHURCH, NATCHEZ**, went to Maple Crest Church, Vidor, Tex., Oct. 9. The group served alongside teams from as far away as New York. Shown are Terrell Foster, Steve Strebeck, Karen Strebeck, Randy Simpson, Missy Spears, David Mize, Kristina Brumfield, "Boo" Brumfield, and, front, Desdre Dedeaux.



FOREST CHURCH, FOREST, held a deacon ordination in September. Shown are Jason Weatherford and his wife Olivia, Joe Pate, and Larry and Debbie Rogers.

In other Church News:

► **County Line Church, Ovett**, is having a fall festival Nov. 11, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., including a car show, gospel sing, cakewalk, and games for kids. Admission is free.



WIGGINS CHURCH, WIGGINS, ordained Sweeney McCurdy, Brian Stewart, and Jason Stewart as deacons. Tom Brooks, pastor.



BETHEL CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO, celebrated Senior Adult Day. George Moak was honored for 43 years of service as a deacon.



ANTIOCH CHURCH, NESHOSA COUNTY, licensed Joseph Knight to preach June 18. From left are his wife Lisa, son Jeff, Knight, and youth pastor Joel Embrey.



Pastor Victor Walsh is shown presenting Austin Bean with his ministry license at **GILLSBURG CHURCH, GILLSBURG**.

Staff Changes



BAY SPRINGS CHURCH, BAY SPRINGS, called Taylor S. Benton as their Associate Pastor of Students and Activities on July 2. He was licensed and ordained on August 27. Benton is pictured with his wife, Hannah, and Bay Springs Church Pastor Lee Yancey.



LILLY ORCHARD CHURCH, JACKSON COUNTY ASSOCIATION, has called Ricky Colvin as pastor. Shown are A.C. Williams, Colvin, Cheryl Colvin, and AMD Philip Price.

HILLCREST CHURCH, CARRIERE, has called Ryan T. May as pastor. May graduated from Mendenhall High School in 2016. He has four years in ministry and is currently attending Pearl River Community College, with plans to attend William Carey University and New Orleans Seminary.



HARRISBURG CHURCH, TUPELO, has called Rob Armstrong as pastor. He is the husband of Jill for 16 years and the father of 3 children, Hannah (10), Eden (4) and Sarah (2). His formal education includes a Master of Divinity from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies and Philosophy from Mississippi College. He is currently working on his Ph. D in Biblical Missiology from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to joining HBC, Pastor Rob was the senior pastor of New Union Baptist Church in Dayton, Tennessee.